

Specification Amendments

Please replace paragraph 0023 on page 12 with the following rewritten paragraph:

According to the present invention, the heating chamber is used to heat the wafer to a temperature sufficient to vaporize any condensed acidic residue, for example HBr, remaining from the etching process on the wafer surface or on loose particles adhering to the wafer surface. While vaporizing of the acidic residue, a vacuum system is simultaneously used to remove the vaporized gases from the chamber. Suitable pressures may be maintained with a range of 10 mTorr to 500 mTorr. A suitable wafer temperature for vaporizing HBr from the wafer surface has been found to be within a range of about 75°C to 100 °C, although most preferably the wafer temperature is about 80 °C. Further, it has been found that the removal of acidic contamination, for example, HBr, by heating the process wafer to about 80 °C can be optimally performed by, for example, by subjecting the process wafer to heating ~~under the~~ for a period of about 45 to about 75 seconds, most preferably about 60 seconds with removal of about 85% of the acidic contamination. It will be appreciated by the skilled practitioner that the process time may be varied by altering the pumping speed (or pressure) and/or by altering heat transfer characteristics.

Please replace paragraph 0027 on page 15 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Referring to Figure 3 where the heating chamber is shown in greater detail, in operation, heating chamber 302 houses base plate 304 equipped with a heat exchange manifold (not shown) and a heat exchange surface ~~305~~ 303 which and the base plate is in fluidic communication with heat exchanger 322 located externally to the chamber 302, the chamber ambient pressure being maintained under vacuum by vacuum pump 312. Heat exchange fluid is supplied by pump 309 from heat exchanger 322 by way of line 314 to base plate 304 equipped internally with a heat exchange manifold (not shown) in contact with heat exchange surface ~~305~~ 303 which in turn contacts wafer 308 to convectively and conductively transfer heat between the heat exchange fluid and the process wafer ~~308~~ 305, respectively. Following heat transfer to heat exchange fluid the heat exchange fluid passes by line 316 to heat exchanger 322 for heat exchange and fluid temperature control.